

# UP THE CREEK

*The club known as “the Orange Army” where fun, support and equality are the foundations of its success*

Newy Paddlers has been operating now for six months and it seemed appropriate to reflect on the success of the club since its incorporation on the **29 March 2016**.

NP have built a strong foundation that has focused on our vision of

*“being a nationally recognised paddlesports club that offers our members an opportunity to learn in an encouraging environment, develop skills and passion to paddle to the best of their ability so they become champions both on the water as well as off the water and*

*to develop a strong and competitive junior membership that can compete at their highest level and to introduce new paddlers with fun and enjoyable paddlesports opportunities”*

## **So what have we achieved?**

### Relationships

Based at Throsby Creek we have quickly established strong relationships with Newcastle Rowing Club, Newcastle Dragon Boat Club and Newcastle Outrigger Canoe Club. Carrington Bowling Club has welcomed us with open arms to hold our committee meetings and any functions at no cost. They put on a great feed in the dining room and you can't go past those bacon and egg rolls.

We have also been fortunate to have the Family Hotel in Hunter St support our activities, a great place to relax and have a good feed and the venue for our Christmas party on the 15 December 2016.

In addition to the local organisations we have built a strong relationship with our governing body, PaddleNSW who have been a tremendous support.

### Membership

At the end of September 2016 our club had grown to 35 Adult Members - 20 Male & 15 Female. From this group of people we have 8 children that hopefully will pursue kayaking as a sport as the club grows.

## Member Booklet

This booklet was put together to provide members with various sources of information to make their paddling experience more enjoyable and to understand the goals of the club. It is a tremendous resource that we have shared with the paddling community. We welcome any feedback on how to improve this document.

## Uniforms

We have identified ourselves in bright orange clothing that everyone is aware of. A fantastic colour that Cheryl Bretag came up with that is a great safety colour on the water and clearly differentiates us from our clubs. They aren't wrong when they say they can see our gazebo from outer space.

## PaddleNSW Marathon Series

Our paddlers participated with enthusiasm at all the races they attended and have quickly established themselves as true ambassadors for the club in the way they have competed and acted – the number one goal was to have fun and try and not win “Nemo” who was awarded to a paddler that went for a swim during the race.

We achieved 84 points in the series and managed 11<sup>th</sup> position out of 20 clubs – what an incredible result

Our first recognized race was Wyong 10 April 2016 where David Campbell was the first male to win points for the club and a couple of races later at Lane Cove 29 May 2016 Cheryl Bretag was the first female after finishing 4<sup>th</sup>.

Darren Forbes and Mark Bretag completed all 9 races of the series.

The achievers for Newy Paddlers were presented with their trophies at Wagga Wagga on Sat 1 Oct 2016.

Congratulations to:

Guy Holloway 1<sup>st</sup> Division 6

Darren Forbes 2<sup>nd</sup> Division 7

Cheryl Bretag 3<sup>rd</sup> Division 12



A huge thank you to Karen Forbes for taking on the voluntary role of timekeeper at the Marathon Series. Karen did an awesome job and was certainly appreciated by us and PNSW

## Coaches

Darren Forbes, John Gruhn and Mark Bretag completed their Level 1 Coaching course at Narabeen Lakes 14-15 May 2016. This course was seen as a priority in order to encourage members to join the club and have fun on the water.

All 3 members have enjoyed helping improve the skills of our members and have met the required instruction hours necessary. A further practical observation of our skills needs to be undertaken in Sydney in the next few months.

Our club is very keen to have further coaches in the club and encourage our female members to undertake a course through PaddleNSW. If you are interested come and have a chat.

## Training

A major achievement has been getting permission from Crown Land and Maritime Services to hold our time trials. These time trials are extremely important to the club as they provide an opportunity to create income and get fitter.

Since our inception we have been aiming to improve the skills of our members and this has meant many cold mornings through Winter seeing how resilient we are. For those of you who don't know Darren has a background in strength and conditioning and he is very keen to get a commitment from any members that want to participate in the 2017 Marathon Series as he has prepared a fitness program so we peak at the right time. This would benefit all members who want to improve their paddling skills.

Summer is here so we would like to see a regular group of members and friends coming along to enjoy the waters at Throsby Creek.



## Equipment

Thanks to the generosity of Manly Warringah Kayak Club we were given 6 boats that will assist with our goal of attracting juniors into the club.

As a result of some kind donations from our members we have been able to acquire:

- 1 bright orange gazebo
- 2 flag banners
- 11 buoys
- 1 First Aid kit
- 31 number holders
- 30 numbers



A big thank you to Darren for the use of his boat trailer and various boats he makes available to members and potential members.

We are building a box of essential equipment items and will continue to ask for support of anything you can donate to assist the growth of the club.

The club has a policy of giving back to its members so as our funds grow the aim will be to build our assets for the benefit of all. We will seek feedback on the best way of spending those monies.

## Facebook Page and Website

Newy Paddlers has a widespread audience with posts reaching on average at least 500 people per post.

Our club is seen as innovative and fun and this is the perfect way to achieve our vision.



The website [www.newypaddlers.org.au](http://www.newypaddlers.org.au) has been recently launched and has a calendar of events to view. There are many plans to enhance the site and ensure the club can be found by interested paddlers.

### **Where to from here?**

In the next 6 months there will be a big focus on grants, sponsorship and fundraising. The monies raised will provide more opportunities to help our members and a key to the club functioning better will be to find a storage facility in the local area.

There will be encouragement given to our Recreation paddlers to attend the wonderful waterways our racing members attend and be part of some organised fun weekends away.

We believe that if we keep having fun we will achieve remarkable things as a club. The club has a vision that can be achieved and Newcastle deserves to have a world class facility that caters for paddlers of all skills and abilities. Watch out for the Orange Army!